character of this subtle poison. Whether it is gaseous in form, or a chemical non-living substance, or a living organism, must be left to the scientific developments of the future. But whatever may be established as the true theory, it would seem that the combined action of heat, moisture and vegetable decomposition is essential to the production of malarial poison. This is the general observation and experience of physicians living in malarious localities. It seems to be well-founded that it gains entrance into the system by the inhalation of air, or by swallowing water containing it. More than one-half of the diseases of our State, especially of our eastern towns and counties, are due to its influence. Finding victims everywhere, insidious in its approaches, invisible, assailing, in preference, those of weakened vital forces, often masking its features and hiding itself behind some other malady, it is only to be routed when assailed by the forces at our command. It clings tenaciously to its old accustomed haunts in our eastern plains, fertile valleys, rich swamps, and along the basins and upon the borders of our streams. Causing two-thirds of the mortality of most warm countries, surely its origin and character cannot much longer be concealed from the knowledge of man. The opponents of the theory that malaria is a living substance, or caused thereby, hold up the periodicity of malarial fevers as an argument to support them, but to this the reply is made that this periodicity is owing to vital changes and periodical developments in these living bodies, and that the morbid phenomena of malarial fevers depend upon the direct action of the malarial parasite on the system.

Those who contend that, be the nature of malaria what it may, the essential factors of its production are the combined action of heat, moisture and vegetable decomposition, are met by objections. These objectors say that such a statement is more declaratory and inferential than established. If this is true, say they, the want of uniformity of action of the malarial cause, in like seasons, localities and conditions would not exist, and malarial fevers would not differ, as they do, in amount and severity, under like circumstances. But those who hold with Lancisi to the extent that said factors, in combination, are essential to malaria, argue that the absence or innocuousness of it in certain seasons and in the same locality finds an easy explanation in this, that such seasons and localities are exempt from those atmospheric vicissitudes, that ther-